

APPENDIX A

RESULTS OF SCOPING

Introduction

The Eastern San Diego County Planning Unit spans a portion of the eastern escarpment of Southern California's Peninsular Ranges. It is a land of remarkable diversity, encompassing a range of environments from pine forests and flowing streams to palm oases overlooking shimmering desert basins. As early Spanish, Mexican, and American pioneers and settlers traversed the region on their way to developing coastal population centers, they encountered small bands of Kumeyaay and Mountain Cahuilla Indians. Except for cattlemen who established isolated ranches in order to graze their stock in the grassy valleys and shrub-covered hills, few of the newcomers settled here. Today, much of the region remains wild and uncrowded in spite of the steady growth of the urban society only a short distance to the west.

Scattered in a north-south band along the mountain front are 98,902 acres of public land under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management. Most of the higher land west is a part of the Cleveland National Forest, while the low desert country to the east is included in the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. Cuyamaca Rancho State Park and a number of small Indian reservations are interspersed with the National Forest lands. The Riverside County and Mexican Border mark the northern and southern boundaries of the unit.

Scoping process

A. Notice of Intent

A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an RMP for the Eastern San Diego County Planning Area was published in the Federal Register on July 14, 2004. A press release announcing the time and location of the two initial public scoping meetings was sent out on August 10, 2004. The public scoping lasted from July 14, 2004 through October 12, 2004.

B. Public Scoping Meetings

Public scoping meetings were held in El Centro and San Diego, California, on September 8 and 9, 2004, respectively. The meetings began with the public being able to look at maps depicting an area of interest and discussing their concerns with a subject matter expert from the El Centro Field Office. The next meeting segment was a comment time where the public was encouraged to state their preferences for the

ESDCRMP/EIS to a panel from the field office. At the end of the meeting information was passed out on how to make additional comments.

The panel consisted of: Greg Thomsen – Field Manager, Lynnette Elser – Resource Supervisor, Gary Taylor – NEPA Coordinator, Bob Haggerty – Law Enforcement, Dallas Meeks - Outdoor Recreation Planner, Chris Knauf – Project Manager, and John Johnson – Wilderness Coordinator. The facilitator was David Frink, and the transcripts were taken by Gillespie Reporting and Document Management Inc..

In addition to the two formal public scoping meetings, in 2005 ECFO staff met with Anza Borrego Desert State Park, the County of San Diego, California State Parks, U.S. Forest Service, and two water districts to gather information for the RMP/EIS process. In June 2006, a Social and Economic Workshop was also conducted in the Planning Area.

BLM contacted 15 federally recognized tribes to solicit information on their cultural issues for Eastern San Diego County Resource Management Plan.

During the initial scoping period, BLM received 17 comment letters. Public comments addressed a variety of issues and concerns regarding resources and resource uses, as well as management considerations. Public comments, issues, and management concerns are summarized in the following three issues:

Issue Summary

A. Summary of Public Comments, Concerns, and Opportunities

- **Issue #1** How will the Natural Resources Values of Eastern San Diego County public lands be managed?

The public comments indicated the desire to maintain the Wilderness Study Areas, turn them into Wilderness areas, or give them to California State Parks. Also, there were several comments to prohibit grazing in peninsular range bighorn sheep habitat and ensure that the threatened and endangered (T&E) species were protected. It was also commented that BLM should stop all activities that damage the land or destroys the wilderness characteristics. It was stated that OHVs should only travel on authorized routes and do not develop any new routes. One commenter stated that grazing should be maintained as a cultural and historic component of the area. Another commenter recommended the development of an area for target shooting to keep the government lands safe. Lastly there were comments to research the ecosystem plants, consider conservation strategies, and manage invasive plants and weeds. One respondent wanted extensive plant monitoring in the ESDCRMP area.

The scope of monitoring requested would require us to increase our Full Time Equivalencies (FTE) by 2 to 3 personnel.

- **Issue #2** How will human activities and uses be managed?

The public comments expressed the public's wish maintain recreation, hunting, OHV, target shooting and camping. Others wanted more control of the OHV riding to maintain biological health of the area. Commenters wanted various routes limited to street legal vehicles only and monitoring of the OHV area. Additional comments indicated that the OHV riding continue, while more solitude areas for lower impact users and wildlife would be conserved. One commenter urged not to open east McCain Valley to OHVs. Another recommended to camouflage illegal routes. One commenter wanted the banning of target shooting in ACECs and greater law enforcement presence, while another wanted to maintain the area's biodiversity.

- **Issue #3** How will the RMP be integrated with other agency and community plans?

This issue centers around the desire to integrate the management plan with other government agencies and to ensure that this issue centers around a desire to ensure that government-to-government consultation has occurred regarding the RMP and EIS.

The data displayed below represents the numbers of comments for each issue and sub-issue.

Issue #1: How will the Natural Resources Values of Eastern San Diego County Public Lands be managed?

- **A** Vegetation Management 18
- **B** Livestock Grazing Management 10
- **C** Riparian and Water Resources 0
- **D** Cultural Resources Protection and Management 10
- **E** Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) 3
- **F** Wilderness Areas 19
- **G** Fire and Fuels Management 2

Issue #2 How will human activities and uses be managed?

- **A** Recreation use 14

• B Transportation and Public Access	2
• C OHV Management	8
• D Hunting	5
• E Shooting	7
• F Electronic sites, Utility Corridors, Right-of-way, Wind Power Generation Sites, and Withdrawals....	4
• G Land Tenure Adjustments	1
• H Law Enforcement	3

Issue #3 How will the RMP be integrated with other agency and community plans?..

• A Emergency Services	1
• B Tourism Management	
• C T&E	3
• D Government to Government	1

B. Issues and Decisions to be Made

The pre-plan prepared by Bureau of Land Management in 2001 anticipated that three major issues would have to be addressed in the course of developing an RMP. These issues are framed as the following questions.

1. How will the natural resource values of the Eastern San Diego County public lands be managed?

Eastern San Diego County public lands support multiple-use opportunities. They support economic activities, offer natural, cultural, scenic, wilderness, and recreational resources. Management of human activities is an integral part of the total public land resource management.

2. How will human activities and uses be managed?

The Planning Area provides a variety of landscapes for many activities and land uses. Management of human activities is essential to preserve present and future resource uses and employment.

3. How will BLM management be integrated with other agency and community plans?

The BLM is committed to work with other agencies and communities in managing the Planning Area. Coordination with federal and state agencies is essential for the effective management of the Planning Area.

Based on the direction provided by BLM management and on comments received during the scoping process BLM has determined that the following issues will be addressed by the management plan.

- Eastern San Diego County public lands support multiple-use opportunities. They support economic activities and offer natural, cultural, scenic, wilderness, and recreational resources. Management of human activities is an integral part of the total public land resource management. To fully protect these resources, BLM will develop policies and plan elements to address the need to protect the natural resources, while managing the human activities.
- The Planning Area provides a variety of landscapes for many activities and land uses. Recreation is a major use of these lands including hunting, backpacking, horseback riding, mountain bike use, sight-seeing pleasure driving, target shooting, and off-highway vehicle use by motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, and full size four-wheel-drive vehicles. Policy and plan elements will be developed for the RMP to address current recreational activities and develop a balance of recreation and conservation. Public scoping questions and comments regarding access, indirect effects, and recreation will be addressed through this issue.
- The BLM is committed to work with other agencies and communities in the managing the Planning Area. Coordination with federal and state agencies, which have jurisdiction over resources within or related to the Planning Area, such as California States Parks Department, California Department of Fish and Game, and the Cleveland National Forest, is essential for the effective management of the Planning Area. Existing agreements with these agencies will be evaluated and modified as appropriate to ensure that BLM's new management objectives are incorporated in them. New agreements with other agencies and local governments will be also likely developed to address specific issues.

C. Issues Raised that will not be Addressed

These issues are outside the decision maker's authority and the scope of this project. Issues were raised that involved Congressional action or regulating activities on private land.

- One respondent stated that Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) should be made into wilderness areas. Only Congress can release or make a WSA into a Wilderness Area. BLM can only recommend an action when asked by Congress.
- Another respondent stated that wind energy development should be regulated on private land. BLM has no authority to do this.